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ART IN AMERICA *AND ELSEWHERE*

AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

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THE ALLENDALE NATIVITY BY GIORGIONE

BY GEORG GRONAU

Florence, Italy

It was in the Autumn of 1894 that I first had the opportunity of viewing the picture now generally known as the *Allendale Nativity*, in the house of Mr. Beaumont to whom it then belonged. Twice in after years I had occasion to renew my acquaintance with the original: once in 1914, again in the house of the owner then Lord Allendale, and in 1930 at the Italian Exhibition at Burlington House. I always had the same profound impression of being in the presence of one of the most beautiful pictures painted in Venice between the years 1500 and 1510 (giving the earliest and latest possible dates), and I believe all art critics have been of this same opinion.

I cannot explain for what reasons I remained undecided concerning the attribution to the master who painted it. I had in mind naturally that Cavalcaselle had, without hesitation, ascribed it to Giorgione himself, and I believe he was the first to give this attribution to the picture which was apparently unknown before the publication of his book; but unfortunately, my own idea of Giorgione at that period (1894), based principally on the study of the Altarpiece in Castelfranco and the *Venus* in the Dresden Museum, was different. On the other hand, I was never prepared to accept the attribution to Catena then suggested by various connoisseurs as the pos-

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sible author of the *Nativity*; I was firmly convinced in my innermost mind that the master who had created it must have belonged to the "Young Generation" — Giorgione, Titian, Palma, Sebastiano — and not to the previous Bellinesque period to which Catena belonged. I expressed this opinion in an article dealing with the Venetian Art Exhibition at the New Gallery, 1895, published in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, and repeated it at a much later date in my *Critical Studies on Giorgione* (1908).

Still feeling uncertain concerning its attribution, I gave its name to designate a small group of pictures which, in my opinion, were by the "Master of the Allendale Nativity", and some other students accepted this theory.

If I now feel certain about the right attribution and that the picture cannot have been painted by anyone else but Giorgione, it is due to the fact that, for the first time, I have been able to see it and study it properly. Previous impressions were spoiled by the thick opaque varnish which is so often found disfiguring a number of pictures in old English collections. Now that this varnish has been removed, one is able to appreciate the extraordinary pictorial quality which fills this picture from beginning to end, and in every particle of it, for the simple reason that we are only now able to view it as the painter had intended it to be seen, the state of preservation being, on the whole, a most satisfactory one.

The picture must have been painted at the very beginning of Giorgione's career. In former days, we were all led into the error of dating it at too late a period, and this has prevented a great number of us from seeing things as they were. I am happy to pay tribute to my old friend, Sir Herbert Cook, who was one of the few to follow Cavalcaselle in his attribution. What he has written about this picture in his book on Giorgione, (London, J. Bell, 1900 and 1904), is still well worth reading.

The picture belongs, as I have just indicated, to Giorgione's first years as an artist, and should be placed quite close to two works — generally recognized as belonging to his early period — the two pictures in the Uffizi Gallery, and also close to the *Judith* at the Hermitage, Leningrad; that means that the *Nativity* is earlier than the Castelfranco Altarpiece and the *Tempesta* in Venice, although it has still many visible affinities with this second picture. Another picture of Giorgione's early period, *The Birth of Paris* — we have documentary evidence that this was one of his youthful works — has, unfortunately, been lost. There exists a small copy by Teniers, which gives us an idea of its composition (Loeser Collection, Florence).

It must, then, be taken for granted that the *Nativity* should be placed chronologically at the year 1500, or at the most one or two years later.



GIORGIONE: NATIVITY
Formerly Benson Collection, London



GIORGIONE: LANDSCAPE DETAIL. THE ALLENDALE NATIVITY
Lord Duceren of Milbank

There is still to be found in it influences of the art of Giovanni Bellini, but associated with a special feeling for colouristic harmony and for nature, qualities which lead us to see in Giorgione one of the greatest masters of all times.

Bellinesque is chiefly the figure of Mary in the group of the *Adoration*. The master does not show the same type of woman as that of his later period, so nobly represented by the Virgin in the Castelfranco Altarpiece with the head of a longish oval shape. Figures to be compared with Joseph's can be found in the two small pictures belonging to the same group: *The Adoration of the Magi* at the National Gallery, and *The Holy Family* in the Benson Collection. It is a remarkable fact, as yet unnoticed, that Giorgione once again used this type of an old man a couple of years later: he is to be found almost identical in *The Judgement of Solomon* at Kingston Lacy (the figure on the right-hand side of the throne). Much more Giorgionesque are the two shepherds, especially the one standing who has his immediate prototype in one of the two men in the center of the *Trial of Moses* in the Uffizi, and certainly the two shepherds in the (lost) picture of the *Birth of Paris* must have been very similar in their structure, judging from the copy by Teniers.

In my opinion very important to support the attribution of the *Nativity* are the small figures of the two shepherds in the middle ground. Bellini was, I believe, the first Venetian to animate his landscapes by such figures. Compare these slender figures with the similar ones in the landscape of the *Judgement of Solomon* in the Uffizi, where is to be found the identical grace, and in each of these pictures particular note should be paid to the way in which one of the shepherds bends his knee. The same mannerism is to be found in the sitting figure on the bas-relief in the other picture in the Uffizi.

What unites all these works I have mentioned in a group which can only be the creation of one mind is chiefly the feeling for landscape. A master who gives such importance to the landscape in the composition of his works was certainly brought up in close intimacy with it in his early life, as was the case with Giorgione, son of the lovely Marca Trevigiana. Here, in his youth, he had lived surrounded by verdant meadows, had actually seen the rippling streams which he has more than once painted in his early pictures, as well as the trees and bushes, and the blue chain of the hills. All these details were imprinted on his mind with the passionate eye of the born artist, and his early work is full of such reminiscences.

During this period he developed a very definite technique in the manner of rendering the foliage of the trees, by placing the leaves in relief with a

thick impasto on dark ground, in a very characteristic manner. The grass, one perceives everywhere, is painted with the lightest touch. Note further the foreground strewn with pebbles, large and small, and occasionally heightened with tiny specks of white.

These subtle details, which are to be noticed in the *Nativity*, are also to be found precisely in the two pictures in the Uffizi Gallery, and even from the small copy of the lost picture, *The Birth of Paris*, one can surmise that it revealed them as well; one still finds them in the *Tempesta*. It is quite sufficient to compare good photographs of these details to be convinced of the correctness of these observations.

The greatest importance must be given to the study of such details when the attribution of a painting is in question. They are the artist's personal handwriting; another artist would have seen and rendered the same things in a different manner.

Needless to say it must not be forgotten, whilst studying these details so intimately, that we are dealing with a great masterpiece of Venetian painting. The wonderful harmony of colours alone is sufficient to give the picture its high status. Everything is rendered with an extraordinary colouristic sense. For instance the piece of rock behind which Joseph is kneeling, or the other one more in the background in front of the tower; every inch here testifies the supreme refinement of taste of the artist who painted it.

It is easy to understand that such pictures quickly attracted the attention of the Venetian amateurs of his time to Giorgione, and that his works were to be found very shortly after in almost all private collections in Venice. In these pictures the connoisseurs found something new: the youthful rendering of nature and the intimate union of figures with the surrounding landscape, the poetical harmony of which appealed to their own sensitive nature, whilst this freshness of observation enchanted them. A vague testimony of the admiration for Giorgione and his works has been preserved, important because it is dated immediately after the artist's death. A correspondent wrote at that time to Isabella d'Este of Mantua (who was anxious to acquire a picture of a *Nativity*, of which she had heard), saying that none of the two Venetian collectors who owned such a painting were willing to sell, at any price (*per pretio nesuno*) because, he adds: "... they have ordered them to enjoy them for themselves." Who can say whether the *Allendale Nativity* may not be one of these two pictures?¹

¹The first mention of this picture is in the Catalogue of the Gallery of Cardinal Fesch (Rome 1841). It was sold at the dispersal of this Collection in 1845. For its further history, refer to the very scholarly notes in the *Commemorative Catalogue of the Exhibition of Italian Art*, edited by Lord Balmiel and Kenneth Clark, London, 1931, p. 114.



SCHOOL OF GIORGIONE: ADORATION OF THE MAGI
National Gallery, London



GIORGIONE: ORDEAL OF MOSES
Uffizi Gallery, Florence



GIORGIONE: JUDGEMENT OF SOLOMON
Uffizi Gallery, Florence

THE GOLD TREASURE OF CHIEN LUNG, EMPEROR OF CHINA

BY BERTHOLD LAUFER

Chicago, Illinois

In A. D. 1783 the great Emperor Chien Lung, who ruled over China from 1736 to 1795, and who was a contemporary of George Washington and a character not unlike Frederick the Great, was made the recipient of a set of gold objects consisting of altogether eighteen articles designed for use on the imperial desk. This presentation was made by a Manchu official of high rank, named Pao Tai, imperial envoy to Tibet. This fact is clearly indicated on the white silk labels pasted in every box, which was especially made for each gold object. The interesting point is that the inscriptions on these labels are not merely written in Chinese, but in the four principal languages which at that time dominated in the empire of China — Chinese, Manchu, Mongol, and Tibetan. The Emperor himself had studied these four languages and mastered them to such a degree that not only could he fluently express himself in each of them, but also was able to write essays in all of them in excellent style. Under his patronage a comparative dictionary of these four languages was published — a work which is still used by us as an indispensable and fundamental source-book.

The labels in question are inscribed in a beautiful calligraphic style. Each inscription contains the identical data pertaining to the dedication of the set and gives the name of Pao Tai, the exact date of the presentation, and the name for the particular object. The official term used in making this gift signifies "a gift of supreme importance and value," including the inference that a man has invested in it his entire fortune, that he has put his heart and soul in it with reverence and devotion and is intent on serving his sovereign to the bitter end.

Each of the eighteen objects intended for use or decoration on the imperial desk is wrought from pure gold, the total weight of which amounts to 5,966 grams (gold and silver were always used unalloyed in China), and is inlaid with beautifully carved and polished plaques of turquoise and lapis lazuli. Now, both turquoise and lapis lazuli are the favorite precious stones of the Tibetans and Mongols and represent an allusion to the great colonial possessions of the empire in Central Asia. Tibet has likewise been celebrated since times immemorial for its wealth of gold. The famous tradition of the Gold-digging Ants related by Herodotus and the Indian epic Mahābhārata, as shown by me in an article written in 1908, refers to gold-digging Tibetan and Mongol tribes in the region of the upper Yellow River valley.

The felicitous and artistic combination of gold with turquoise and lapis lazuli is an intentional and distinct allusion to Tibet. In this connection it is noteworthy that the Chinese imperial envoy sent from Peking to Lhasa, the holy capital of Tibet, was styled in Tibetan "the gold-letter bearer" (*gser-yig-pa*). In the same manner as the Chinese speak of the sovereign's dragon face, the Tibetans refer to it as "the royal golden face" and call the emperor "the golden king" and Peking "the golden castle."

In 1725 the Chinese Government appointed two High Commissioners to control the political affairs of Tibet. Several attempts at revolt in 1750 led to the entire suppression of the temporal sovereignty in Tibet, and the government of the country was placed thenceforward in the hands of the two eminent spiritual rulers, the Dalai Lama of Lhasa and the Panchen Lama of Tashilhunpo, who were aided by a council of four laymen, called Ministers of State, under the direction in chief of the two Imperial Commissioners or Residents appointed from Peking. In consequence of the British advance in India the possession of Tibet was jealously guarded by the Chinese, and the Emperor Chien Lung did everything to attract and to please the high and powerful dignitaries of the Lamaist Church, who on their part controlled the masses of the population, not only in Tibet, but also in Mongolia. The Emperor was deeply interested in Buddhism and Buddhist teachings, but it was rather political motives that prompted him to promote and to maintain sumptuous Lama temples in his capital and in his summer residence Jehol, since in this manner he remained in direct personal contact with the Living Buddhas and Incarnations.

In 1793 the Emperor, as though he desired to reciprocate, transmitted to Lhasa a golden urn to be used in selecting the new incarnations. When a Living Buddha is about to die, that is, to transmigrate or to change his form of existence, he tells beforehand of the place where he will reappear, while at his birth he can without difficulty recite the events of his former existence. Little slips of wood, each bearing the name of one of the candidates, were thrown into the golden urn sent by the Emperor Chien Lung, which was then placed in the principal temple of Lhasa in front of the statue of Tsongkhapa, the reformer of Lamaism. A slip was then drawn from the urn, and the child whose name was inscribed on it was declared the new Living Buddha — subject to the Emperor's approval. It is thus manifest that the Chinese, while outwardly respecting Tibetan beliefs and customs, exercised unrestricted control of the political machinery and had a direct influence over the election of the high ecclesiastic dignitaries, including the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. This is the historical background from which

the presentation of this group of gold objects is set off. No doubt there was a hidden significant political intention behind this gift, the full import of which escapes our knowledge, but it is obvious that it was intended as a greeting from Tibet to the dragon throne of Peking, as a homage to the emperor of China in his function as the invisible ruler and real protector of Tibet.

In ancient times turquoise was not much appreciated by the Chinese. Among archaic bronze vessels and bronze implements found in southern Mongolia (wrongly labeled Scythian art) there are some with turquoise inlays. Turquoise was a stone which enjoyed popularity among the nomadic tribes of ancient Turkish and Iranian stock living in central Asia. Persia has always been famed for its beautiful turquoise mined at Nishapur, which became known in China during the fourteenth century in the Mongol period. I believe that the turquoise employed in our gold set comes from the mines of Nishapur and was especially ordered there for the imperial treasure. The turquoise mined in Hupeh Province, China, are not of superior quality. Under the Tang dynasty (A. D. 618-906) we find Chinese gold and jade ornaments inlaid with plaques or beads of turquoise.

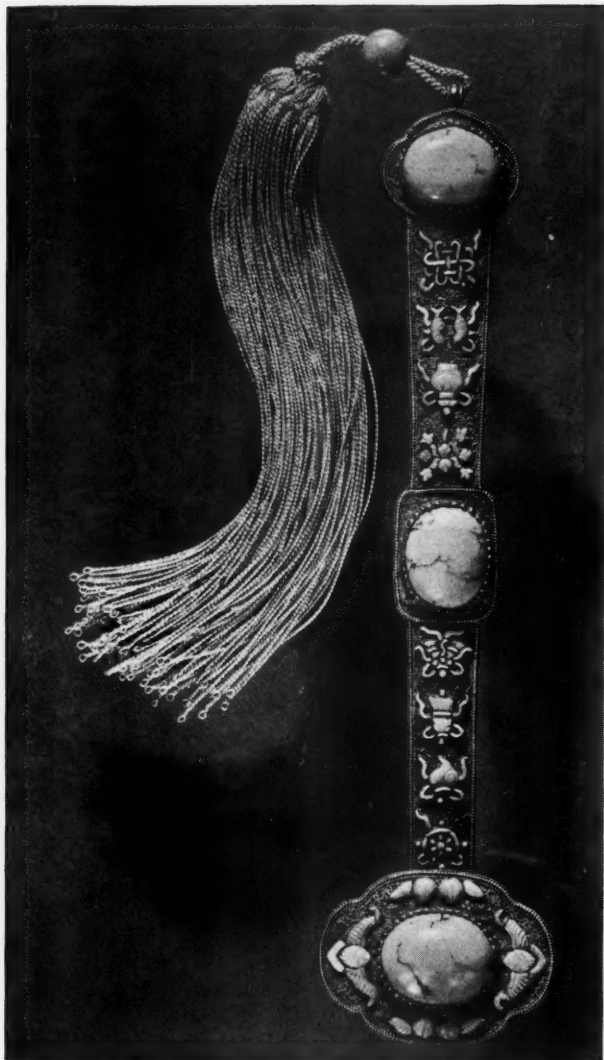
Tibet, however, has always been the classical land of turquoise. In Tibet a general national passion for this stone prevails among all classes of people, high and low, as the result of centuries or millenniums of training. What jade is to the Chinese turquoise is to the Tibetans. Turquoise is used in the copper and bronze statues of the gods, in swords, daggers, and knives, in charm boxes, rosaries, and jewelry, and in the head-dresses of women. There is hardly any object used in Tibet, into which turquoise would not enter in some fashion. Turquoise is the great medium of exchange throughout Tibet. Numerous articles now on exhibition in the Field Museum were acquired by me from Tibetans through barter with turquoise. To the Tibetans a turquoise is a symbol of their country comparable to the azure-blue of their beautiful lakes and flowers. As we speak of the blue of the sky, the Tibetans say poetically "the turquoise of heaven." In a Tibetan poem the Himalaya is described thus: "This mountain range spreading like a thousand lotuses is white and like rock-crystal during the three winter months; during the three months of summer it is azure-blue like turquoise; during the three autumnal months it is yellow like gold, and in the vernal moons, striped like the skin of a tiger. This chain of mountains, excellent in color and form and of perfect harmony, is inexhaustible in auspicious omens." This passage reveals the innate nature love of the Tibetan people and the parallel which they like to draw between the colors of their favorite gems and those

of their natural surroundings in the course of the seasons. In another poem it is said, "On the plain where diamond rocks glitter is a lake with a mirror like turquoise and gold."

Gold and turquoise belonged to the most ancient offerings made to gods and demons, and ranked among the most precious gifts bestowed on saints and Lamas by kings and wealthy laymen. The thrones occupied by kings and church dignitaries were adorned with gold and turquoises, which likewise ornamented the cloaks worn by them. Unusually fine and large turquoises were known under poetical names such as "the resplendent, divine turquoise" and had the value of a good race-horse. Marco Polo, speaking of the province of Caidu, which is identical with the western part of Szechwan Province, a territory largely inhabited by Tibetan tribes, refers to a mountain in that country "wherein they find a kind of stone called turquoise, in great abundance, and it is a very beautiful stone; these the emperor does not allow to be extracted without his special order." For more information on the history of turquoise in India, Tibet, and China the reader may be referred to Laufer's *Notes on Turquoise in the East* (Field Museum Publication 169) and *Sino-Iranica* (pp. 516-520).

Lapis lazuli is mined in several localities of eastern Tibet and together with rubies was included by the ancient kings of Tibet among the presents sent to the sovereigns of China. The principal supply of the finest kind of lapis, however, comes from the mountains of Badakshan, north of the Hindu Kush, which produces two precious stones — lapis and the balas ruby or spinel. From this source the ancient Persians and Assyrians derived their lapis, and during the Tang dynasty (A. D. 618-906) it was exported from there to China. Marco Polo visited the mines, calling the stone *azure* and saying that it is the finest in the world and is obtained in a vein like silver. This exportation to China has persisted through the middle ages down to the present time. Lapis lazuli is called in Chinese "essence of gold" (*kin tsing*) or "dark-blue gold stone" (*ts'ing kin shi*), and was chiefly enlisted for inlaying, occasionally also for jewelry and carving of figurines and snuff-bottles. The emperor used to wear a rosary of lapis beads when performing worship on the altar of Heaven, and a rosary of turquoise beads when officiating in the temple of the Moon.

It is difficult to outline briefly a history of gold in China. One point must be emphasized, and this will always speak in favor of the Chinese, that they were never obsessed by the hunger and greed for gold (the *auri sacra fames*, "the accursed hunger for gold," of the Roman poet), which characterizes the Semites, Greeks, Romans, and all other European nations ancient and



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modern. Gold was never coined into money in China, gold was not amassed and hoarded just for the love of it and, although found in many parts of the country, was never intensely or systematically exploited. We never hear in China of a "gold rush" or "gold fever", symptoms so characteristic of Europe and America. There is good evidence for believing that the oldest metal known to the ancient Chinese was silver, then copper, and lastly gold. Among the relics of the Shang dynasty, as far as I know, gold or objects of gold have not yet been traced, and probably were still unknown.

It seems that only in the late Chou period (about 300 B. C.) did gold come into prominence when gold foil was applied to bronze vessels as a coating or was used as an inlay in the surface of ritual bronzes. Gold was then considered as the most precious metal which also was the object of barter, and among precious substances was considered as ranking next to jade. Its chief use was for magico-religious purposes in that it was interred with the dead, the belief being entertained that gold, in the same manner as jade, was capable of preventing the body from decay, preserving it, and promoting the resurrection and immortality of the individual.

It is an interesting fact that there is no genuine word for gold in the Chinese language; there is only the descriptive term "yellow metal" (*huang kin*), on the same level as "white metal" which describes silver or tin, "red metal" referring to copper, and "black metal" to iron. In course of time, the general designation *kin* ("metal") was reserved for gold, but the occurrence of this word in ancient texts presents a stumbling-block, as it is by no means certain in each and every case whether it refers to metals in general, or to gold, or to another specific metal, and there is no consensus of opinion among the ancient commentators.

Under the Han (206 B. C.-A. D. 220) the production of gold increased considerably. The philosopher Wang Chung writes that "gold and jade are considered the choicest omens; the sound of gold and the color of jade are most appreciated by man; gold is produced in the earth, and the color of the earth is yellow; the ruling element of the Han dynasty is earth, which accounts for the production of gold." Gilded bronze vases and vessels with gold incrustations belong to the finest achievements of Han art. Jade was still extensively used for personal ornaments, and for this purpose was more favorite with the people than gold.

Under the Six Dynasties gold and silver were lavishly employed for Buddhist statues and statuettes and for animal figurines, also for bowls, dishes, and boxes. We stand on firmer ground in coming to the Tang dynasty, whose productions are clearly recognizable. During that memorable epoch

the Chinese began to appreciate the qualities of gold for artistic purposes. It is amazing that the art of the goldsmith was then fully developed and had apparently reached its climax: all manners of technique in treating gold were known and practiced in the glorious age of the Tang, such as beating out and cutting gold foil, gold filigree, repoussé work, work à jour, beading, making fine gold threads and gold wire and twisting it into spirals, and a marvelous combination of various processes into one harmonious work of art. The succeeding dynasties have adopted the technical lessons of the Tang without adding much that is new.

While many fine gold ornaments and even gold crowns of the Tang, Sung and later dynasties have come out of China during the last decade or so, nothing like the gold treasure of the Emperor Chien Lung has ever appeared before. This set, both from a technical and artistic viewpoint, is absolutely unique in the world and the most perfect achievement of the goldsmith's craft that has ever been attained anywhere by human hands. The gold objects found in Tutankhamen's tomb are dwarfed and eclipsed by this production of a master mind, which baffles description. It is useless to attempt to describe the processes of its workmanship, which is so microscopically fine and so fairy-like delicate that its proper appreciation is only possible when studied under a powerful magnifying lens. We can but admire the enchanting color harmony of the gold with the charming blues of turquois and lapis lazuli, the simplicity and purity of style, and the exquisite choice of decorative elements.

Let us not be oblivious to the fact that period means but little in the history of art. A work of art is not necessarily great or good because it is old, and not necessarily inferior or poor because it is more or less recent. It is artistic merit and quality and the spirit pervading a work of art which is the decisive factor. Some scholars regard the Chinese art of the eighteenth century as one of a purely retrospective and imitative character and one of mere technical perfection. This sweeping generalization is not correct, however. True it is that ancient forms and designs were then perpetuated and reproduced, but not slavishly; it was, in the main, a new spirit cast into ancient molds, a new soul breathed into the bodies of the past, which rose again to a better and bigger life. In all lines of artistic endeavor we recognize a great amount of progress, improved taste, and novel ideas — in porcelain, textiles, embroidery, lacquer ware, jewelry, bronzes, sculpture, and painting. In many cases the artists of the Chien Lung period were more original than the originals taken by them as models, in the same manner as Shakespeare was more original and greater than the writers from whom he derived the



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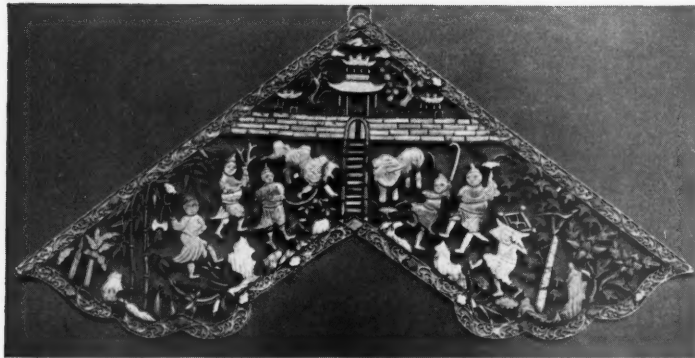
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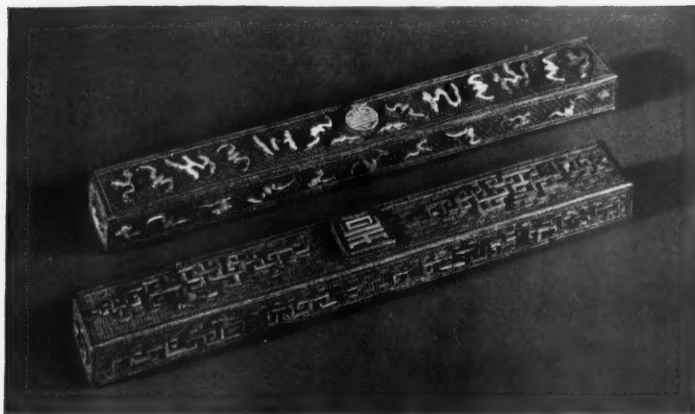
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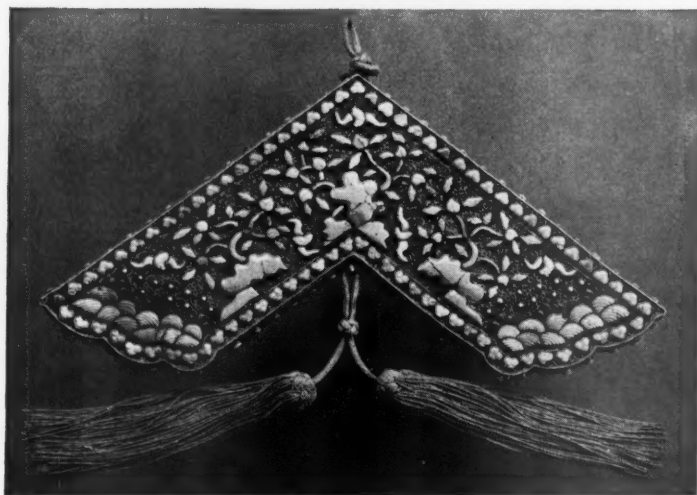
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DESK ORNAMENT
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plots for his dramas. Confucius, China's great sage, said, "Everything has its beauty, but not every one sees it." There are Chien Lung bronzes more artistic and therefore more desirable than many Han, Tang, and Sung bronzes; and there are painters of the same period endowed with a striking originality of mind and power of brush. In fact, the reign of Chien Lung signals China's golden age in art and literature, a great epoch of renaissance, and the craft of the goldsmith must then have reached the climax of perfection, as witnessed by these superlative examples.

There is another important point to which attention must be drawn. While each piece individually merits careful study and analysis and must elicit our admiration for its beauty of form and mastery of execution, the whole set must also be viewed synthetically and examined as a unit in its totality. As every one will readily recognize, it was conceived by a single artist according to a well-devised and premeditated plan. It is this unity of plan and thought that lends another attractive charm to this group of desk paraphernalia. The set was first designed by the hand of a guiding genius who was endowed with a vision, a profound artistic sense, a refined taste, and a keen appreciation of the beauty of line and form. His was the mind of a master; assuredly he was the leader of his art during his days, another Benvenuto Cellini. His name unfortunately is unknown. In my essay *East and West* (*The Open Court*, December, 1933) I have set forth the reasons which prompted Chinese artists not to sign their masterpieces. They were too modest and too sensible to mar their productions with their signatures, and did not flatter themselves into the belief that they personally were the creators of their creations, but humbly attributed them to the action of a higher power, to the merits of their ancestors or to the will of Heaven. The artist was a sort of high priest; he produced, not to please his contemporaries, but to honor his ancestors and to attain his own salvation.

The artist who designed this group of gold objects did not work for the acclaim of the multitude or with a view to an exhibition and obtaining a *grand prix*. He had a finer and nobler ambition; his chief inspiration was the thought that his work was to be seen and judged by just one man — the Son of Heaven. All his efforts were bent on this one objective. We may well realize how many years he must have toiled over his plans and designs in his study, how many sleepless nights he must have spent over them, how many years he must have anxiously watched his staff of artisans who were entrusted with the task of bringing his ideas to life. The result of his painstaking labors which without exaggeration we may estimate at ten years or even more is now happily before our eyes; surely it was worthy of the name

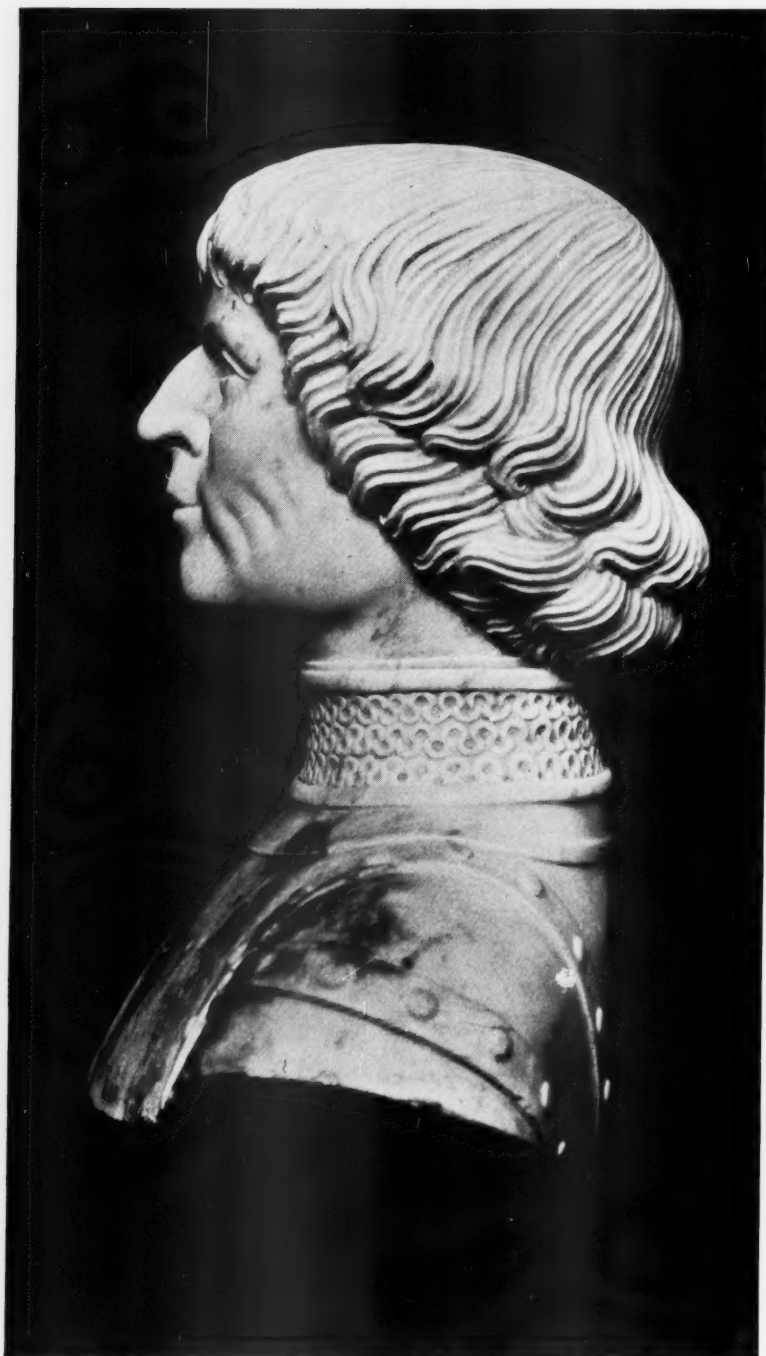
of the great emperor. We can read from the superhuman efforts expended on the workmanship that the men who devoted to it their time and energy constantly had the thought of the Son of Heaven on their minds and were actuated by the earnest desire of service and loyalty to his majesty — loyalty, the cardinal virtue of a good citizen inculcated by Confucius.

On the other hand, only a character and personality of the greatness of Chien Lung was capable of inspiring a masterpiece like this one. In other words, it has two focuses of radiation; on the one hand, the human, altruistic, and wonderfully devoted spirit of the artist and his staff; on the other hand, the high-minded, art-loving, and generous spirit of the sovereign. There is, accordingly, a symphonic unit pervading this set of eighteen pieces. Each object has its definite place and significance, and bears a relation to every other object.

A word should be said as to why Pao Tai presented his lord with a series of objects just to adorn his writing desk. Here we have to remember that writing in China is calligraphy, an art on the same par as drawing and painting, and the first and essential prerequisite and characteristic of a scholar. The written word was always worshiped as a fetish, and any materials and utensils devoted to the art of writing were given the most careful attention on the part of scholars. The celebrated calligrapher, Wang Hi-chi (A. D. 321-379), whose handwriting is said to have been "light as floating clouds and vigorous as a startled dragon," is credited with the dictum, "Paper symbolizes the troops arrayed for battle; the writing-brush, sword and shield; ink represents the soldier's armor; the ink-stone, a city's wall and moat, while the sentiments of the heart symbolize the chief commander." In this saying the mental attitude of the Chinese toward the arsenal of the learned is perfectly crystalized; paper, brush, ink, and ink-slab are the four great emblems of scholarship and culture; all of these are inventions which the Chinese may justly claim as their own, and which constitute fundamentals of their civilization.

The presentation to the Son of Heaven of magnificent paraphernalia for his desk was a tribute to his standing and reputation as a scholar, a homage to his literary achievements. And a scholar and poet he was, and a very gifted and distinguished one. His collected essays and poems written in Chinese and Manchu fill several hundred volumes. One of these, a eulogy of Mukden and its environment, was translated into French by the Jesuit Father Amiot (published in Paris, 1770) and excited the admiration of Voltaire, who addressed an appreciative ode to the emperor. We may imagine that this gold set was capable of firing his imagination and inspiring him to many a composition.





BUST OF ALFONSO FIRST, KING OF NAPLES
BY FRANCESCO LAURANA
The Detroit Institute of Fine Arts

LAURANA'S BUST OF ALFONSO FIRST,
KING OF NAPLES

*With what fine sense of form the modelling
Reveals the thought that animates this face;
How well one still can accurately trace
The play of passion there—a darkened wing—
And feel the fierce exigencies that wring
His restless soul. The sculptor left no place
For doubt—and yet the head held high with grace
Has the majestic bearing of a king.*

*Keen were his deep-set piercing eyes that scanned
The armored knights who fought at his command;
No victory for him could be too great
To satisfy the hunger of his heart
That men should set him on a throne apart
And place upon his brow the crown of Fate.*

—Frederic Fairchild Sherman

LUIGI LUCIONI

BY JAMES W. LANE

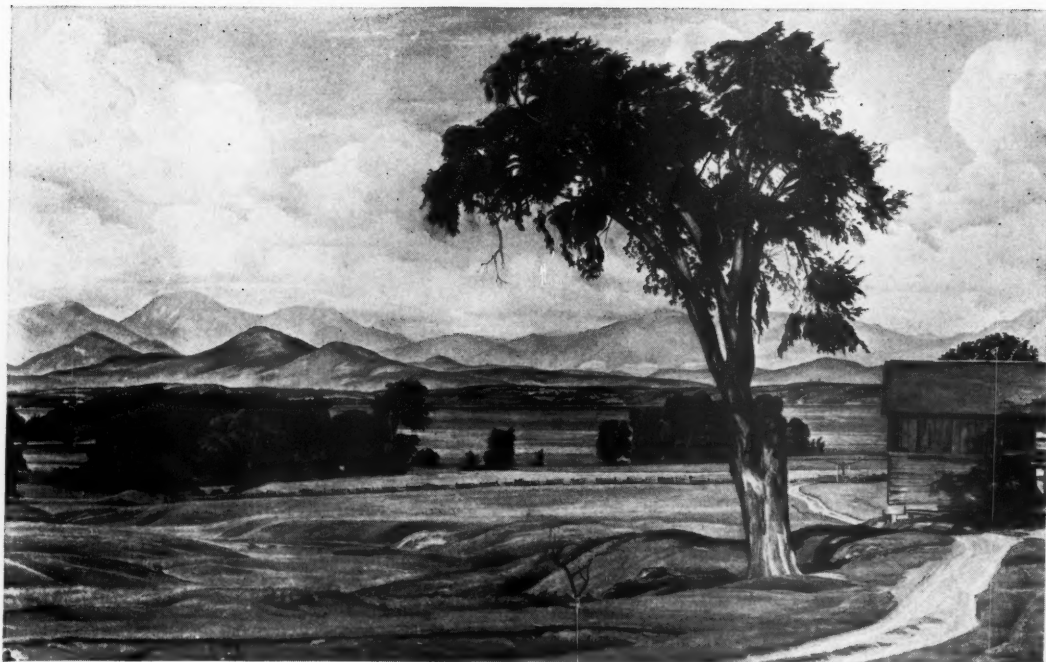
St. James, Long Island, New York

The beginning of a curious and false depreciation of the painting of Luigi Lucioni has come through the use of the phrase "photographic artist." I think it worth while, in the case of such a talented painter, to try to run this charge to earth before discussing the less "suspect" qualities that his art undoubtedly has.

Lucioni, a young painter who at the age of thirty-eight has had a marked popular success, has been called a modern Ingres. This attribution, if more high-sounding than that of "photographic artist," is none the less a detraction, for, although we may admire Ingres's draughtsmanship, we are not supposed to admire his color (which is often very fine) today. Neither are we supposed to admire his use of "props": we are given to think that they were totally unnecessary, led the eye nowhere, and were used merely to test the hand of a virtuoso artist, like the writing of a purple passage in a book. Again, Ingres is supposed to represent a stiff, rather stuffy attitude towards art — the classical as opposed to the romantic. But you never hear the person who wants to run down Ingres call him a realist. No, that would never do. Realism denotes passion and integrity, and it is a much-admired quality today in the repertoire of a painter, as it has always been. Ingres was an arch realist.

Lucioni need undergo no more serious aspersion. If to know things be to love them, Lucioni must be a painter of some passion. You may say that the older school of "photographic artists" loved things; that that is why they are "photographic." But they didn't love things *artistically*. The modern photographic painter must be a great selector. If he is, his art may be profound. Sheeler, a more arid painter than Lucioni, is a photographic painter whose works are marked by intense selectivity. You cannot duly score him, any more than you can Lucioni, for preferring sharp contours, high finish like the gleam of a glass or of ceramics, and landscapes that seem glimpsed through a stereoscope.

The point, then, to remember about Lucioni is that there is something most modern in his work. The art-buying public, which is not made up wholly of the conservatives, knows and likes it. The inclusion of Lucioni in public galleries like those in Kansas City, St. Louis, New York, Cambridge, and Providence, and in collections of private owners whose taste is undeniable as well as discriminating, attests his ability to impart this mod-



LAKE PASTURES
BY LUIGI LUCIONI



THE VILLAGE OF STOWE, VERMONT
BY LUIGI LUCIONI

ern touch. We moderns are supposed to love crispness, the definite object, the decisive touch. A painting may dissolve itself into a dew, as we see in the work of Marin or Zorach, and being modern, it makes us occasionally worship it. There is certainly no harm in this, if the work is good, but don't let us forget that the un-messy, less lacrimonious style is modern, too.

No, the modern touch in Lucioni is his selectivity. You would not think, to look at his Vermont landscapes, full of selected detail painted with a fine brush, that he had to work just as hard determining what to leave out as what to leave in. Though the American landscapes do not appear to have been so grandly or consciously designed as those Lucioni painted on a short visit to his birthplace, Malnate, in Lombardy, they are characterized by equal sharpness of vision. It is as though Lucioni presented you with a pair of high-power binoculars. Hence, you see the distance in its clearness almost as well as you see the foreground. Hence, the feeling the view gives you of being monarch of all you survey. You see all; you can tell all, in one sweep. Nothing could be pleasanter, especially to the quickly-moving modern mind.

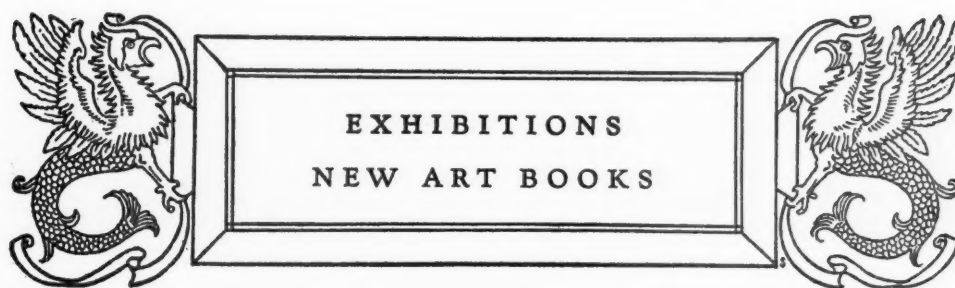
Yet these landscapes have a profundity, too, which the Hudson River School lacked. They have as much detail as a contour map, or, if you want a comparison with a Hudson River artist, a Cropsey. They represent the triumph of detail in a panorama. But that is not why they are profound. They are profound because, without the tricks of atmospheric perspective or fusions, they tell you the truth about Vermont. Under those high north-west clouds on a summer day American landscapes have a particularly clear, hard light. Compared with a Lucioni landscape, a Hudson River School work, say, a Kensett, seems almost fuzzy. The Hudson River School men — and this is one of their chief claims to charm — made splendid use of receding planes. Like Lucioni, not a few of those painters were trained as commercial engravers. But they couldn't get away from the sickening effects of this technique in the foregrounds of their canvases. Their foregrounds, with the plants, mullein, goldenrod, or what not, painted with a terrible life-likeness, ruined them. Lucioni, who is not afraid of detail, didn't fall into that trap. He lets his panorama unfold with a minimum recession of planes. But he does not let his foregrounds advance into a sort of figurative apron-stage that many of the Hudson River School, Durand, for example, liked to extend.

Lucioni's sense of detail and his arrangement of important planes is masterly, is Canalettan. You may find, especially if you have a weakness for "weeping" styles, that Lucioni's style is harsh. But the point is that he very definitely means it to be so. He has always admired the harshness of Italian

Renaissance art, as in the portraits of Piero di Cosimo and Antonello da Messina. There, too, you have a passionate realism. The "props" make a glowing ensemble, but the faces are painted with such character, the details have been so finely chosen, that they are superior to the accessories of this robust art. It is not too much to say that Lucioni in his portraiture has much of this authentic Cinquecento touch. And note well that we moderns refer to Piero and to Antonello as realists, *not* as photographic artists.

Possibly it was after painting still-life that Lucioni incurred the title of "photographic artist." He sometimes enjoys introducing prints or drawings on the walls in the backgrounds of his still-lives, not for the reason of wishing to be thought fantastic or surrealistic — although it is amazing with what few changes some Lucionis might become at least parodies of Dali and Roy — but because he wishes to obtain that sense of intimacy, that homey, comfortable feeling associable with Vermeer and with the Dutch generally. Yet mark how much less detail Lucioni employs than Vermeer or any more modern photographic painter, from Fortuny to Watrous. The beautiful still-life, *Anniversary*, has but three objects: a shell, a tanagra figurine (the central motive), and a silver card-tray. But with what artistry they have been arranged! What fine studies in differing materials and radiation of light, related only by a common delicate and neutral coloration.

As for the details in a Lucioni portrait, they are much fewer than in a David or an Ingres portrait. Mr. Sheldon Cheney in his *World History of Art* says that when Ingres returned from Italy to Paris in 1824 the era of the daguerreotype had begun and that "even a classic realist must meet the competition of the camera." An excuse, perhaps, for Ingres turning photographic? Well, Lucioni also lives in an era of photography, but he does not *compete* with the camera. He is far more subtle — and, in addition, much harsher and sharper — in brief, a very artistic painter with an original vision, token of a remarkable eagle-eye.



EXHIBITIONS

VENETIAN PAINTINGS OF THE XV AND XVI CENTURIES

Nowhere outside of Venice is it possible to admire to its full extent the radiant magnificence of Venetian painting. The great Titian exhibition of 1935 and the Tintoretto show of 1937 in the Palazzo Pesaro were composed mostly of treasures preserved in Venetian churches and palaces (with some valuable additions from foreign collections). In spite of this limitation they were the most impressive shows ever seen and gave a surprisingly new conception of the totality of each artist even to the specialist and so-called connoisseur. We can, of course, obtain the greatest delight from looking at the marvellous treasures of Venetian painting in the old traditional collections in the Prado or the Louvre or in Vienna — in comparison with Venice, they are but a reflection. But even for such a reflection we have to be thankful; when we here in a country so far from Venice have the opportunity of looking at the "Bacchanal" in the Widener collection — the last and most fantastic work of Giovanni Bellini — or at the "Mars and Venus" with the charming horse in the Metropolitan Museum, we feel again something of the atmosphere of Venice. It was the idea of the Knoedler show last April to produce a similar reaction by bringing together a series of Venetian paintings mostly from public and private American collections.

Such unique masterpieces as the Widener "Bacchanal" were not available, but some excellent paintings were exhibited from somewhat out-of-the-way or not easily accessible places. The monochrome by *Andrea Mantegna* (from the Cincinnati Museum), in spite of its small size, is really a masterpiece. The two figures, the Cumæan Sybil and the King Tarquinias with the book of prophecies in his hand (Cincinnati Art Museum), have all the qualities of movement and proportion typical of this great Renaissance master. The seriousness and gravity of such a composition make it easy to understand why the young and still semi-gothic Albrecht Dürer was so strongly impressed by the works of the master of Padua.

Not of equal importance, but also very serious and of great significance, is the small portrait bust, supposedly of Bartolommeo Colleoni, the great condottiere (S. H. Kress collection). Whoever the sitter may be, this characteristic portrait of a man with strong and energetic features, clad in a doublet of finely coloured, gold-patterned brocade, is almost generally accepted as a work of *Bellini*. But the *Bellini* specialists do not agree whether it is by Giovanni or by his brother Gentile — a question difficult to decide.

The "St. Jerome Reading, in a Landscape" (S. H. Kress collection) is, however, in the composition at least, undoubtedly by *Giovanni Bellini*. It is signed and dated 1505, but here too the scholars do not agree, or not wholly. Most of them take it for granted that it is a genuine work by Giovanni's own hand. Berenson, however, doubted the date and suggested that the painting was executed by Giovanni Bellini and Basaiti in collaboration. The most recent biographer of Bellini (Dussler, *Giovanni Bellini*, 1937) gives the design only to Giovanni, the rest to the studio. As it is, the composition is very charming, although the execution of the figure of St. Jerome is weaker than usual.

The half-length figure of "Christ at the Column" ascribed to *Antonello da Messina*

(Count Giacomo Miari di Cumano) is also a problem. It is true that the signed "Ecce Homo" (bust only) in the Metropolitan Museum, and other similar paintings (e. g., in Vicenza) look different even in the brush work (though it is always difficult to compare works in different states of preservation). The picture in the Knoedler exhibition has a certain Lombard character, and it is interesting to note that still another, "Christ at the Column" (bust only) in the Cook collection, Richmond, also attributed to Antonello, and compared (by van Marle) with our picture, has sometimes been given to the Lombard painter Andrea Solario, under the influence of Antonello da Messina. Antonio da Saliba has also to be taken into consideration, if the head of "Christ at the Column" in the Venice Academy is rightly ascribed to this follower of Antonello. If this picture was painted, as it is said to have been, after a lost original by Antonello, the half-length figure could also repeat an Antonello composition.

The exhibition included two paintings by *Cima da Conegliano*: the "Virgin with the nude Child" standing on a low parapet, still rather Bellinesque and therefore very early, and — more characteristic — the "Madonna with St. Francis and St. Claire" (George Blumenthal collection) belonging to Cima's last years.

Carlo Crivelli's "Madonna and Child," formerly in the Huldshinsky collection in Berlin, belongs to this strange master's early period, in which the late gothic or pre-manneristic features of his later works, with the elongated and twisted fingers and limbs, are not yet very outspoken.

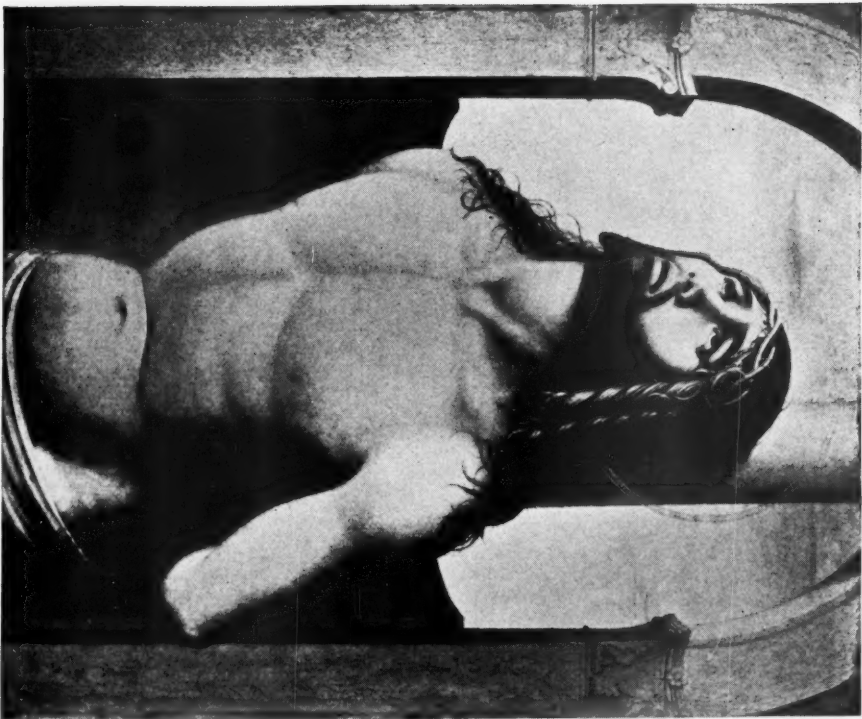
If Crivelli is in some way "retardataire", *Lorenzo Lotto's* work is peering into the future. He is amongst the minor painters of Venice or rather of the "terra ferma" one of the most interesting, but at the same time one of the most unsteady and changeable. His "Nativity" of 1523 (Kress collection) has a certain realistic feeling so characteristic of the north Italian school in the first half of the century, which about seventy years later Caravaggio (also a north Italian) was to use and to develop. The long neckline of the bent head of the Virgin (still more stressed in other paintings of similar subjects by Lotto) was also to be taken over by Caravaggio. This realism is more evident in the other painting by Lotto representing the three-quarters-length figure of St. Peter Martyr (Fogg Art Museum) with a knife in his head and a dagger in his breast. The simplicity and the expression of this kind of painting made it so very valuable for later periods of realism. The painting belongs to Lotto's latest period, about 1550.

The tiny picture (almost a miniature) of "Mars and Venus" (Brooklyn Museum) is decidedly "Giorgionesque." It belongs to the kind of lyrical and musical compositions, often mythological, which were so in vogue in a certain society of young patricians in Venice and its surroundings, and which are connected with the name of Giorgione. But this "Giorgionism," like the realism so important for the formation of the early baroque style, is not restricted to Giorgione or to his immediate followers, but is a collective name for a group of works, representing similar tendencies, by painters of Treviso or of Ferrara, by the Dossis, by the young Titian, by Palma Vecchio, and by other less-known artists. The attribution to Palma seems to me in the present case quite convincing.

Of the nine or ten portraits exhibited in this show, by far the best — if we except the Bellini portrait already mentioned — certainly the most attractive is the portrait of a young man by *Bartolommeo Veneto* (Percy Straus collection) with the badge of St. Luke in his black cap (perhaps a portrait of a painter) holding, rather ostentatiously, a golden star-shaped object. This highly interesting painter, born in Venice, is in his portraits not at all Venetian, but much more influenced by the Milanese school, and shows a remarkable affinity to northern art. His style corresponds to the early manneristic current in Central Italy about 1520.

The portrait bust of a man, signed *Francesco Mazzola* of Parma, has little to do with Venetian painting, but is rather provincial and not to be compared with the exciting portraits of his great son, Francesco Parmeggianino.

The two portraits of Prelates here ascribed to *Sebastiano del Piombo* (probably connected) are also problems. The man with the hour glass is dated 1519, but at this period Sebastiano was already strongly under the influence of Michelangelo and his style is



ANTONELLO DA MESSINA: CHRIST AT THE COLUMN
Collection of Count Giacomo Mari di Cumano, Padua



SALVADOR DALI: Mrs. CLARENCE WOOLLEY

decidedly monumental; the portraits of this period (e. g., "Dorothea," Berlin) are highly stylized.

The half-length portrait of a gentleman (sometimes called Fulvio Orsini) by Titian (Epstein collection, Baltimore) dated 1561, goes closely together with the portrait of the well-known "Man with the Palm" in Dresden.

Of the two female portraits, the half-length of a girl in a red dress, with two gold chains around her neck, does not belong to the Venetian "ambiente," but is certainly Lombard. It was discovered quite recently. The colors are rather loud. It is attributed to *Andrea Solario*. The other is a quite amusing small portrait bust of a lady in a richly ornamented bodice, with a decorative landscape in the background. It is given to *Catena*.

There remain still two paintings from the later years of this amazingly rich century of Venetian painting. Both, a Veronese and a Tintoretto, are highly impressive pictures, both are quite obviously works extremely close to these great masters, but neither is absolutely typical and therefore they are rather difficult to insert in the masters' "œuvre." The "Creation of Eve" (Art Institute of Chicago) is undoubtedly full of the special charm which is peculiar to Veronese who is with Watteau the most charming painter who ever existed. The types of God the Father and the little Eve, whose eyes he opens with a delicate gesture, are well known to all who love and study Veronese. But the foreshortening of the sleeping Adam seems to me rather awkward, whilst Veronese's rendering of this kind of movement is always extremely facile. Then, in which period are we to place this painting? Stylistically it cannot be early, for we have a very nice example of his early manner in the other painting by Veronese exhibited in this show — the "Marriage of St. Catherine" (Charles V. Hickox collection, formerly Liechtenstein Gallery, Vienna), which is still under the influence of Bonifazio. The "Creation of Eve" has therefore been dated by art critics about 1570. If, however, one compares other paintings of the later years of Veronese (e. g., the "Mars and Venus" in the Metropolitan Museum or the two allegorical paintings in the Frick collection) one sees the difference, not only in the composition — in the latter paintings much more compressed — but also in the coloring. The subject — as Mr. Rich of the Chicago Art Institute has already observed — is not very typical of Veronese, but still more unusual is the placing of the figures in such an extensive landscape, and one which is quite open on the left side. Veronese is, as a master of purely decorative figure compositions (decorative in the highest sense), generally not very much interested in landscape (the landscapes in the Villa Maser, if they are by him, are of quite another character), much less so than Tintoretto, and in this he is to be contrasted with Titian and the Giorgionism. I know only one painting ascribed to Veronese which shows a certain similarity to the "Creation of Eve"; that is the "Family of Adam," a small painting in the Doge's Palace, where we find the same pine tree of northern character which, as far as I know, is used nowhere else by Veronese, and this painting must also be late. Now we know how closely Veronese, especially in his later years, collaborated with his brother Benedetto, with his sons and with other assistants and painters, like Zelotti, Farinati, etc. It is very difficult to distinguish the different hands, and many very fine paintings (e. g., in the Louvre) which were formerly called Veronese, are today labelled as "school pictures." Perhaps the Veronese show, which will follow next year the Titian and Tintoretto shows, will throw more light on the relation of Veronese to his studio and then also we will see more clearly in this instance.

The case of the "Christ on the Sea of Galilee" by Tintoretto (Arthur Sachs collection) is similar. Here we have a very fine painting, even more exciting than the Veronese, with the blue waves of the sea and the black clouds. Here again we have undoubtedly Tintoretto-like features — at least at first sight. But here again we see differences from absolutely authentic works of Tintoretto, both in detail and in the ensemble, and we do not know exactly where to place it (there is a difference of thirty years between the dating of Borenius, who places it in the sixties, and that of L. Venturi, who places it in the nineties). In the whole of the Tintoretto exhibition held last year in Venice there was nothing similar to this composition. So far as one can judge in its present condition (it

seems to be a little rubbed or needs varnish) the brush work does not correspond exactly to that of the later (or the latest) work of Tintoretto. The folds of Christ's cloak, the leaves on the tree, the shapes of the clouds, are not exactly in the style of Tintoretto, in spite of a certain obvious similarity. It is, therefore, not astonishing that there were recently critics who claimed that the painting was a work of the young Greco Theotocopuli (because of the triangular waves, the manneristic movements, etc.), under the influence of Tintoretto. The authorship of Greco would be hard to prove, because the works he painted in Italy before about 1575, when he left for Spain, are rather different. Be that as it may, this work belongs, like the Veronese, not to the master himself, but to his immediate circle, which does not diminish the value of this interesting painting in the least.

—WALTER FRIEDLAENDER

THE ILLUSTRATED PASSION CYCLE

The Pierpont Morgan Library has recently given the New York public another opportunity to view its manuscripts and other works of art, this time with a display in its galleries selected to illustrate the Passion Cycle and the Resurrection. The pictures were chosen from a wide range of manuscripts of the Middle Ages and augmented by ivories, enamels, goldsmiths' work, and a few drawings and etchings of the Renaissance. The remarkable size of the collection now owned by the Library can be appreciated in part by the number of illustrations exhibited for each of the chosen episodes — five to sixteen examples for the historical scenes, drawn from manuscripts alone. With the exception of three manuscripts and one enamel, the entire exhibition was selected to show the work of artists of Western and Central Europe from the X through the XVII century, and while opportunity for comparison with East Christian conception and style was lacking in most cases, there was adequate material for detection of trends of influence, and particularly for appreciation of changes in style and taste from period to period within the countries represented.

It is well known that the first centuries of the Christian era produced nothing in art which could be called a developed Passion Cycle in the later sense of the term, and that no pictures of suffering or of ardent lamentation have come down to us. Theories have been advanced to explain this apparent reluctance to represent Christ in the act of suffering, all perhaps partially true. It has been claimed, for example, that the ignominy of a felon's death was a shock to the minds of the early Christians, producing an abhorrence of any visible reminder, and resulting for some in adherence to such doctrines as the Gnostic or the Docetic; it has been claimed that the mystery of the suffering was too sacred for representation, or again, that fear of detection and persecution prompted the early Christians to substitute symbols for those scenes of the life of Christ which might reflect on the authority of the State. There is, however, clear evidence in literature that the suffering of Christ was recognized, as witness certain passages in the Epistles (Col. i, 24; Gal. ii, 19; I Peter ii, 19-21), and the writings of Melito of Sardis in the II century. Particularly realistic were the descriptions and comments of the Syrian Church Fathers (Ephraem, Isaac of Antioch, James of Sarugh, etc.), and certainly the desire of the early martyrs to emulate the suffering of Christ indicates no repulsion in the contemplation of the Passion. Whatever the explanation, the fact remains that the art of the Early Christian period was chiefly concerned with the representation of Christ's miracles, and generally confined the Passion to a few narrative episodes ending with the Crucifixion. The latter was frequently represented symbolically, never realistically, a fact which seems to support the theory that the portrayal of physical suffering in Christ was not acceptable; but it should be remembered that the Resurrection was also rendered by symbols, suggesting that possibly an age intent on developing a symbolic liturgy for the mysteries of the Passion might have preferred pictorial symbols to accompany this ritual rather than realistic portrayal of episode.

During the VI century there was evident a growing tendency to dwell on the Passion (See Venantius Fortunatus, *Vexilla regis*, etc.) and a few centuries later the narratives of the Gospels began to be copied separately into books of devotion with special pages dedicated to the Passion. But in the West it was not until the XIII century, the period of St. Francis of Assisi with his extreme devotion to the Passion, and St. Bernard of Clairvaux with his explanations of the mystic meaning of the acts of the suffering, and probably due in part to the preaching of the crusades, that a complete independent pictorial cycle developed, and new compositions appeared as an integral part of the series. The illustrated Passion Cycle as an isolated object of contemplation was essentially a product of the Middle Ages.

Strictly speaking, the Passion begins with the Agony in Gethsemane, but the Morgan Library, following the practice of the mediæval church and the illuminator, began its cycle with the preparation for the Passion. The episodes chosen were the following: the Entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, Agony in Gethsemane, Betrayal and Arrest, the Trials before Caiaphas and before Pilate, the Flagellation, the Mocking and Crowning with Thorns, the Bearing of the Cross, the Crucifixion, Deposition, Bewailing, Entombment, and the Resurrection. The exhibition added to this series a number of illustrations depicting the Ascension, and many of the two purely devotional conceptions which supplement the Bewailing — the Pietà and the Christ of Sorrows. Much credit is due the member of the staff who undertook to select and arrange this exhibition.

From such a wealth of material, all interesting, much of it important in the history of art, it is difficult in a review to single out illustrations for comment. From the Entry into Jerusalem group, the manuscript of outstanding interest to the mediævalist was the XI century Lectionary, Morgan Ms. 780, executed at Salzburg. This is a particularly fine example of the use and arrangement of the mediæval pictorial idiom — Christ, to be recognized by His crossed nimbus, astride an ass, and followed by an apostle; a youth breaking branches from a stylized tree, and another spreading his mantle before the ass; a gate in the architectural frame — all that was needed for the man of the XI century, his eye trained to the meaning of these pictographs, to recognize the chief actor, the place, the details of the event, and so to know the whole story. Perhaps this might be called a survival of the Early Christian love of symbols, realistic symbols however.

Of special delight to the iconographer was Morgan Ms. 641, an XI century Missal written at Mont-Saint-Michel, opened to show the Last Supper. Christ and the apostles are seated on the far side of an oblong table; Judas is in the foreground and receiving the sop from the hand of Christ. Between the apostles and the edge of the table is a billowy band of green which has no apparent meaning either to the structure of the table, its cloth, or the seated figures. It is a survival from some early archetype which represented the figures as reclining on a bolster or couch about a table, misunderstood by the artist of this manuscript or one of his predecessors, but witness to the inherent slavishness to established formulæ for sacred themes contending with the desire to modernize and develop new forms.

It is only in profusely illustrated cycles that the Mocking and Buffeting and the Crowning of Christ with Thorns are all represented with separate compositions. The fact that the actions of mocking, that is, the spitting, buffeting, smiting with hands, and the blindfolding, as recited by the three Gospels (Matt., Mark, Luke), can all, with the exception of the blindfolding, be included in a representation of the collective accounts of the crowning (Matt., Mark, John), would suggest that were one scene only to be used, the crowning with thorns would be selected. Curiously enough, this is not the case, and even into the early XIV century the scene is rare. On the other hand, representations of the individual Instruments of the Passion always include the crown of thorns though they frequently omit the symbols of mocking and buffeting. An XI century Gospel Book, Morgan Ms. 781, shows this rare scene, and is one of the earliest unquestioned mediæval examples on record (Fig. 1).

Among the representations of the Flagellation was a XIII century Franco-Flemish Psalter, Ms. 72, with the pelican in his piety above the pillar to which Christ is bound.

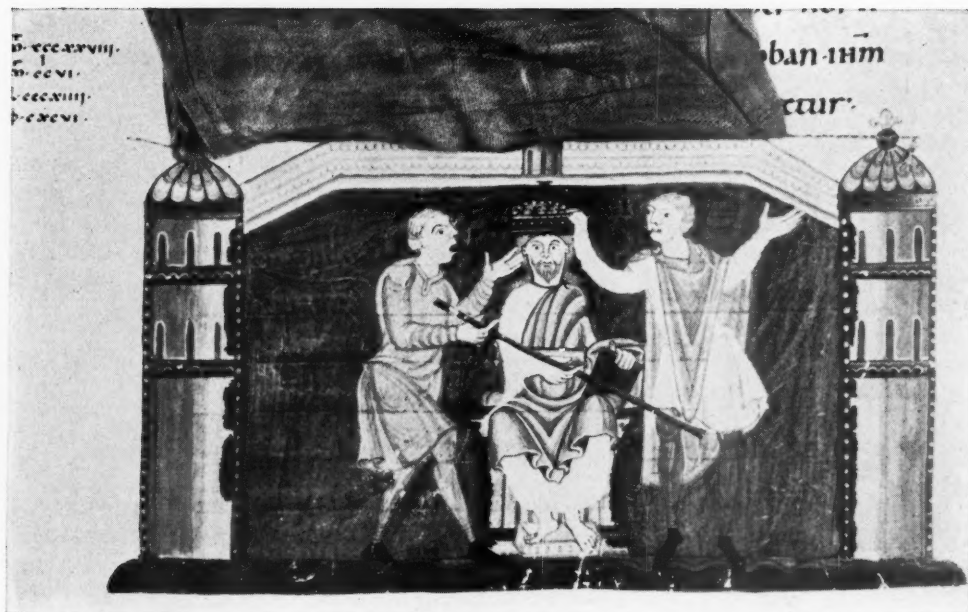
According to legend, the female pelican wounds her young in cherishing them, and they die; after three days the male bird comes to the nest, stands over the dead birds, and by piercing his side allows his own blood to flow over them, thus restoring the birds to life. The legend, a symbol of resurrection, is generally associated with the Crucifixion, and is often represented by the pelican at the top of the cross. As a part of the Flagellation it is certainly rare if not unique in this manuscript.

The exhibition afforded an excellent opportunity for a study of the Western development of the Bewailing and its supplementary derivatives, the Christ of Sorrows and the Pietà. The origins of motivation and the iconography of East Christian art cannot be discussed here (see G. Millet, *Iconographie de l'Evangile*, 1916, chap. X); suffice it to say that apocryphal accounts and the laments of the Virgin and the Magdalene were the inspiration. An element of lamentation had been introduced in the Bearing of the Cross by the sorrowing women who follow the Christ, and again in the Deposition by the gesture of the Virgin as she holds the detached hand of the dead Christ, but it is the Bewailing scene itself which strikes the keynote of the late mediæval attitude toward the Passion. Morgan Ms. 360 is typical of the scene (Fig. 2): the dead Christ is lying on a shroud, His head and shoulders apparently supported by the seated Virgin, John and another apostle caress His hands and feet, and in the background are Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, and two of the Holy Women. This same manuscript, not content with the one lament, carries the note of bewailing into the next scene, the Entombment (Fig. 2). Here the Virgin has her arms about the shoulders of Christ, and appears to assist Joseph and John who are lowering the body into a sarcophagus, and Mary Magdalene is represented with her arms raised above her head in that gesture of unrestrained grief which became so popular and widespread in the XIV century. How easily this combination of the two episodes could be effected is evident from the characteristic Western form of the Entombment seen in a XIII century German manuscript, Morgan 280. Here the body of Christ is lowered into a sarcophagus by Joseph of Arimathea and another figure, and Nicodemus anoints the body. It needed only the addition of the sorrowing Virgin and John, and the wailing Magdalene to imply the two acts and produce a composition which could serve double duty, as in the XIV century painted polyptych from Catalonia shown in the exhibition.

That a similar synthesis could be less convincingly accomplished from the formulæ of the same two scenes in East Christian art is shown in an XI century Byzantine manuscript, Morgan 639. In the foreground of the composition, otherwise filled by the Deposition, is the Bewailing, represented by the figure of the dead Christ wearing a loin cloth, lying on the ground, the head supported by the seated Virgin, at the feet the crouching figures of Joseph and another, and to the left the entrance to a rock-tomb. This portal of the cavern implies the Entombment but does not actually represent it, for the East Christian traditional formula for this scene required a shrouded form borne toward the entrance of the tomb.

The Christ of Sorrows, inspired by an East Christian archetype of the upright half-figure of Christ before the cross, the hands detached and showing the wounds, was widely used in the West not only to supplement the Bewailing in the Passion series, but as a separate devotional image (For a discussion see Erwin Panofsky, *Imago Pietatis*, in *Festschrift für Max Friedländer*, 1927). This *Imago Pietatis* was printed on indulgences during the XV and XVI centuries, particularly in the North, and was always a favorite subject for representation on the *pax* or *osculatorium*. The wide variety of forms which the image assumed from the XIV through the XVI century, together with the Pietà — the Virgin supporting the figure of the dead Christ on her lap — was admirably illustrated by the exhibition.

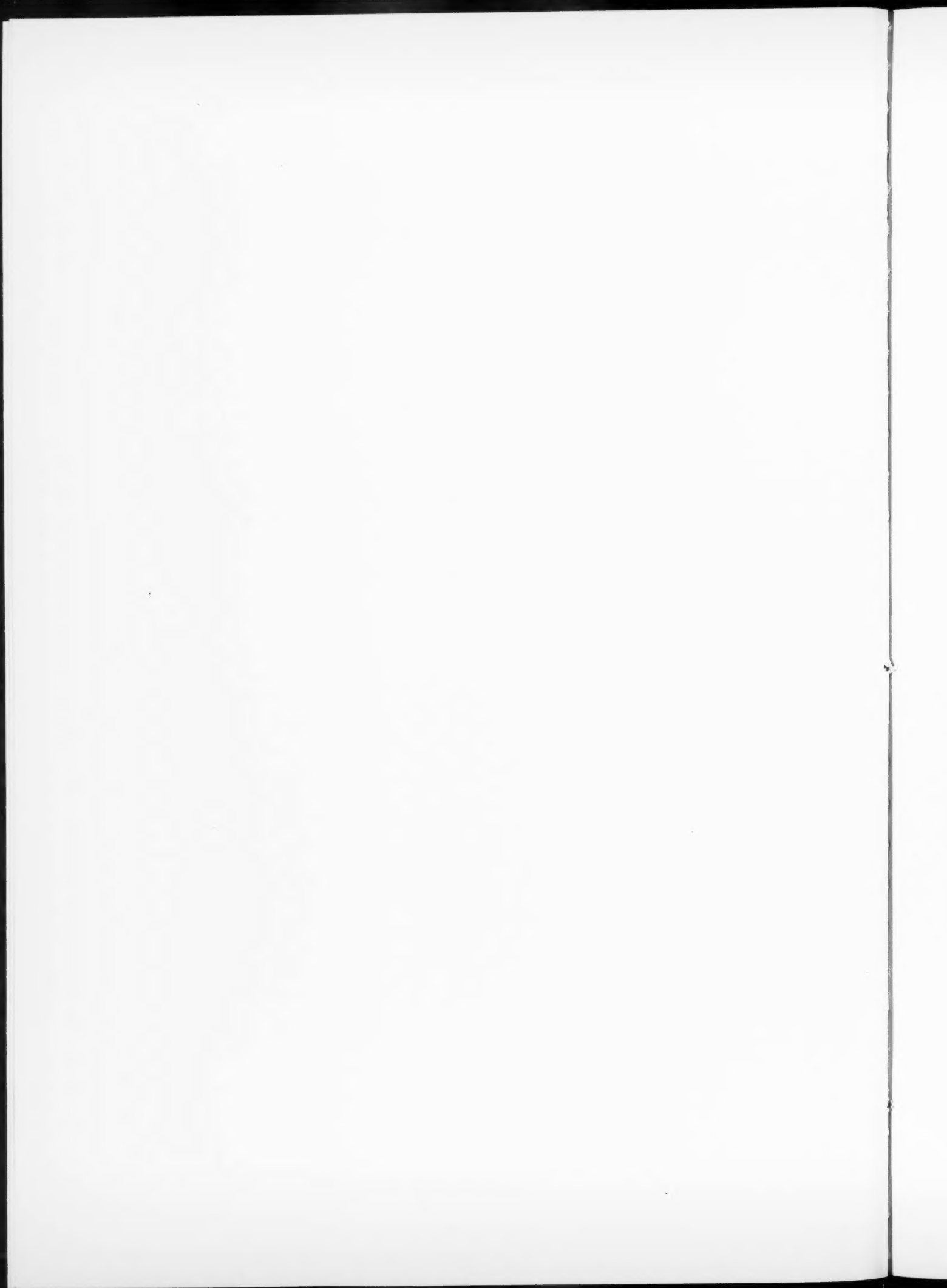
There were a great number of pictures in the display of the Crucifixion, ranging from compositions giving the barest essentials to those including the greatest possible confusion of detail and accessories, some of the details rendered in the traditional manner, others apparently new inventions. Particularly evident to one viewing so large a collection is the growing tendency with time to introduce contemporary detail of cos-



CHRIST CROWNED WITH THORNS. ELEVENTH CENTURY AUSTRIAN (SALZBURG) MSS.
The Pierpont Morgan Library



BEWAILING AND ENTOMBMENT. FOURTEENTH CENTURY ITALIAN MSS.
The Pierpont Morgan Library



tume. While traditional garb is retained for the Virgin, John and the Holy Women, the soldiers and spectators become more and more elaborate in dress, and frequently compete for attention with the main action of the scene. The effect is naive to the modern eye; how it was considered by the age which produced it we cannot say, except to recognize that it must have been acceptable. Unless the representation is to be regarded purely as illustration and not as the portrayal of a dramatic event, the success of this anachronism is doubtful. It is the old question of the advisability of attempting to re-enact any great drama in "modern dress." That the degree of success attainable is in proportion to the greatness of the actors, or in this case of the artist, was demonstrated at the exhibition by the inclusion of that remarkable and moving etching by Rembrandt, *The Three Crosses*.

— HELEN WOODRUFF

REVALUATION OF BENJAMIN WEST

More legendary glamour attaches to the name of Quaker born Benjamin West than to that of any American painter. The precocious lad who, it was said, learned the rudiments of his craft from the Redskins of the Pennsylvania forest became a well-nigh mythical figure. The subject of fantastic romance and anecdote, the object of fulsome adulation, and later the victim of unmerited obloquy, West stood in sore need of just such revaluation as that afforded by the recent exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. This year marks the bicentennial of Benjamin West. Hence it is but fitting that the event should be signalized near the scene of West's modest origin, and his first steps along the pathway to fame, kingly patronage, Royal Academy presidency, and ceremonial interment in St. Paul's Cathedral, London.

It is not without gratitude that one recalls the West Memorial Exhibition at the Philadelphia Art Alliance in 1921, as likewise the Brooklyn Museum offering of 1922. Both were worthy assemblies of West paintings. However, on neither occasion was any serious endeavour made to establish the chronology of West's production, nor to formulate a critical estimate of his place as a creative force in the art of his day and generation. The sixty-four oil paintings, thirty-one drawings, and half-dozen or so engravings on view at the Philadelphia art acropolis tell a different story. Chosen with rare acumen and displayed sequentially with the aim of illustrating the artist's progressive development, they acquaint the public, for virtually the first time, with West's true status and significance. Furthermore the copiously annotated catalogue includes contributions by Director Fiske Kimball and Associate Director Henri Marceau which are models of scholarly research and discriminating analysis.

And what, specifically, did this forthright, industrious spirit achieve during his some fourscore years of high-minded devotion to the cause of pictorial expression? Beyond question West was a remarkable preceptor. He exercised far-reaching influence upon the numerous pupils from the homeland who frequented his spacious, hospitable New-man-street studio — notably upon such figures as Matthew Pratt, Peale, Stuart, Allston, and Morse. In consequence West's position as the founder and titular head of the so-called American School remains indisputable. On the side of personal accomplishment the case for West is equally clear. Glance at the walls of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and you will confront a portraitist of agreeably eclectic sympathy ranging from the aristocratic allure of Gainsborough and Lawrence to the robust solidity of Raeburn. Portraiture as such does not disclose West in his most authentic vein. One must turn to such a movingly heroic composition as the *Death of General Wolfe*, lent by the National Gallery of Canada, in order to sense the artist's veritable calibre and capacity. Here West becomes a bold, convincing innovator. In a period of arid formalism — to be explicit, in 1771 — this man proclaimed his purpose "to abide by the truth" and depict the scene in hand as he felt it actually must have transpired. He clothed his figures not

in the togas and trappings of Græco-Roman academic convention but was willing to risk "the barbarism of boots, buttons, and blunder-busses." Naturally the official world, including his patron George III, cold-shouldered the picture, but Reynolds, its early opponent, was converted, and in due course the fresh-visioned, soundly reasoning little Quaker met complete vindication.

The incident is as typical of West's basic character as it is of his contribution to art. It was his life maxim "to paint nothing without studying the object." Yet West was no pedant, but rather a genuine precursor. As Dr. Kimball succinctly notes, at the apogee of classicism West became a realist with premonitions of romantic fervour, just as previously he had proved himself one of the earliest proponents of that same classicism. Such are a few of the points clarified by the current Philadelphia presentation of West. The exhibition is a notable and enlightening tribute to the Quaker pioneer of native art who, though he so long practised his profession in England, remained integrally American.

— CHRISTIAN BRINTON

GREAT PORTRAITS FROM IMPRESSIONISM TO MODERNISM

The recent loan exhibition held by Wildenstein and Company for the benefit of the Public Education Association presented a notable group of portraits, illustrating all the chief phases of modern art from Impressionism through Surrealism, and displaying the wide range of stylistic possibility inherent in modern portraiture.

Manet, the true originator of Impressionism, was represented by three portraits, of which the portrait of Victorine Meurand is most outstanding. This portrait, constructed of a limited number of tones, each one clearly definable and occupying a distinct area, exemplifies the highly selective style of the earliest Impressionism. A momentary aspect of existence was chosen for representation, and yet the painted representation of the moment was both simplified and highly organized. In the Degas portraits we find that Impressionism has developed to the point of representing, in a loosely constructed area, what has been casually observed by the glance of an eye. And yet in these portraits there is a strong, and unimpressionistic, linearism. Derain's portrait of Manet and Berthe-Morrisot's portrait of Mme. Hismes are the most casual, the most impressionistically conceived, in the exhibition. For Renoir, though technically an Impressionist, is unimpressionistic in his emphasis on the construction of solid volume, and in the infusion into his portraits of a pointed emotional content. In Cézanne's portraits we find the cornerstone and foundation for the Post-Impressionistic movement. The solid, formal, geometrical, still-life portrait of Mme. Cézanne is indeed a far cry from Impressionism.

Other Post-Impressionists were represented by a rich variety of portraits. Gauguin's self-portrait is a decorative pattern in flat color. Van Gogh's self-portrait reveals in the excited brushwork a highly personal, nervous vitality, while his Mme. Ginoux directly translates a coherently realized person into a powerfully conceived design. This much-exhibited portrait of the Arlesienne cannot be seen too often; it is sure to be the *pièce de résistance* in any exhibition of modern portraiture. Toulouse-Lautrec's *Jane d'Avril* displays the sharp instantaneous vision of the crippled painter, and his verve and spirit are visible in every stroke of paint. The economy and emphasis creates a great caricature, and the vital color and design puts this portrait far beyond the bounds of caricature.

The "Fauves" were represented by Roualt, and by Matisse, whose portraits are made almost wholly abstract by the vivid and arbitrary use of form and color.

That Cubism invaded even the field of portraiture is shown by Picasso's faceted portrait of Georges Bracque, and by his *Italienne*, an abstract design composed in flat units of color.

Chronologically the exhibition ends with Dali's electrifying portrait of Mrs. Clarence Woolley, in which the sharp textural reality of the sitter combines with a surrealist setting in such a manner as to absolutely confound the real and the unreal.

— JEAN LIPMAN



JOSEPH PICKETT: WASHINGTON UNDER THE COUNCIL TREE
The Newark Museum



BENJAMIN WEST: LANDSCAPE
The Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia

MASTERS OF POPULAR PAINTING

The exhibition of popular painting recently presented by the Museum of Modern Art strongly reinforced the position of this branch of modern painting. Rousseau, Pickett and Hicks and anonymous early American folk paintings now have their acknowledged place in art history, but the group of individuals who are today painting remarkable pictures without the advantages and disadvantages of formal training has been generally ignored.

Although many rather ordinary pictures shone by the reflected glory of the Rousseaus, Picketts and Hicks also displayed, the collection as a whole was vivid and interesting, and valuable as a many-sided picture of "primitive" painting. This type of representation depends upon the artist's independence of the real appearance of things, as seen by the eye, and the primitive quality of the painting is a result of the artist's unconsciously abstract attitude. Various sorts of abstraction are achieved in this manner. In Bombois' paintings, for instance, the colors are more elementary and vivid than they appear to the eye, while in Peyronnet and Vivin's pictures the detail is sharpened in a strikingly unillusionistic manner. The "popular" painters achieved their effects largely through their powers of abstract design, for their direct vision tended always towards simplification and stylization. It is primarily by their abstract creativeness that these masters of popular painting must be judged. Certainly none of the modern paintings exhibited were of the calibre of a Rousseau, although a few of Bombois' and Vivin's works approached this level. The American paintings were strikingly weak. Seraphine's wild orgies of design could only have been admired by those who were enthusiastic about everything primitive. Some of Bauchant's and Rimbert's designs suggested the dangers even to the artist of this indiscriminate enthusiasm, for they betrayed a deliberateness of intention, a conscious utilizing of the primitive formula.

It is well to beware of generously overestimating these modern primitive paintings, but it seems safe to expect that after assiduous weeding a small group of them will be classed among the major works of modern art.

— JEAN LIPMAN

THE GARI MELCHERS MEMORIAL EXHIBITION

The memorial exhibition of the paintings of the late Gari Melchers at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts at Richmond celebrated the accomplishment of one of the best of our native painters of his time, who is represented in many of the great European galleries as well as in our own museums. His *Easter Morn* at Toledo, *The Holland Bride*, *The Skaters* at the Pennsylvania Museum, *The Green Lamp*, *The Communicants*, and his last canvas, *The Lace Cap*, all shown there, convincingly exemplify his originality in thought and expression. Whatever his art owes to the development of the impressionistic formula, his personal presentation of character in portraiture, of grace and gaiety in flower arrangements and of the deep emotion of religious experience far outweighs his debt to any modern technic. His was a fine influence in a troubled world and he himself was a most lovable person. He never sought public notice, but devoted his life rather to the service of a high intellectual and emotional ideal of the possibilities of expression in the creation of a chromatic poetry that will probably outlast the spectacular canvases of his ambitious contemporaries. One reads with pleasure in Mr. Colt's introduction to the catalogue of this exhibition of Puvis de Chavannes pinning his own Cross of the Legion of Honour on Melchers' breast upon hearing that he had had no notification of the honor, though the announcement had appeared in the papers. Such incidents as this, and the Dutch critic's saying of him that at last a painter had come with a just interpretation of the spirit as well as the outward aspect of the Dutch people, and the words of Dean Vaughan standing with Melchers before his portrait by the artist and saying, "Melchers, some day this will be known as the portrait of an unknown man by Gari Melchers" is as accurate an appraisal of the painter's work and worth as we are likely to encounter.

— FREDERIC FAIRCHILD SHERMAN

NEW ART BOOKS

LORENZO DI PIETRO, DETTO IL VECCHIETTA. *Giorgio Vigni*. Monografie e Studi a cura dell' Istituto di Storia dell' Arte della R. Università di Firenze, vol. II. Firenze, G. C. Sansoni, 1937.

A period of intense research characterized by the publication of innumerable articles and œuvre catalogues seems to be followed by a period which aims at a more synthesized view of personalities or periods. Almost at the same time — if we remain in the field of Sienese art — a book on Giovanni di Paolo and on Vecchietta, the great antipodes of the second generation of the Sienese Quattrocento, were published.

The purpose of Signor Vigni's book is definitely a synthesis. With great care he has brought together all the information scattered through many books and periodicals. He has arranged this information in a very practical form: a biography, a survey of the bibliography and a discussion of the single works, with a most useful reproduction of the important testimonials of the sources, and a criticism of the various attributions. In this way he was able to write a text free from tiresome detail. He analyses the artist's main works and tries to give an idea of Vecchietta's historical importance and of his absolute artistic quality. The former is easily explained. Vecchietta, born a Sienese, came early under the influence of Florentine art, and holds a key position in the process (which lasts the whole Quattrocento) of instilling into the idealism of the Sienese something of the realism of Donatello, Masaccio and the other great Florentines. In regard to the second problem I am not sure that justice is done the artist. Pictures like the altarpiece of the Uffizi have a greater dignity and show a finer sense for composition than the author cares to admit. In some cases, an attempt to reconstruct the original state of the picture, with the frame which played an important part in the whole composition, would have proved to him that Vecchietta had a greater feeling for space and architecture than he imagines. Quite frequently one would have liked a still more penetrating and detailed analysis, perhaps even at the expense of some flourishes of style, which are apt to make one overlook doubtful promises and conclusions.

There are a few details which might be mentioned. The archangels in the Last Judgment in the Sacristy of the Ospedale were certainly originally not "black," but their once brilliantly silver armours have become oxydized. Vecchietta's sculptures still present many puzzles. The two statues of the Loggia dei Mercanti seem closer to early works of Donatello, like the S. Mark on Orsanmichele, than to Donatello's later work. The Sienese conservatism of Vecchietta makes him take up a style which Donatello had already discarded forty years ago. I can not see in the horrid deathmask of the tomb statue of Mariano Sozzini in the Bargello any high artistic merit. The Foscari monument in S. Maria del Popolo in Rome is still an unsolved puzzle in spite of P. Cellini's ingenious article and the assurance with which Signor Vigni accepts the former's conclusions. Not less problematical is the beautiful Madonna relief of the Palazzo Chigi Caraceni.

TILMANN RIEMENSCHNEIDER; EIN GEDENBUCH. *Herausgegeben und eingeleitet von Justus Bier*. Vierte erweiterte Auflage. Wein, Anton Schroll & Co., 1937.

That this book corresponds to a long-felt need is proven by the fact that since 1931 it has been published in no less than four editions. And certainly nobody better than Dr. Bier could have been chosen for such a concise introduction to the life and the work of Tilmann Riemenschneider. He has been the first, after the neglect of almost a generation, to study this most prominent and famous German sculptor and has written a long, critical account concerning him, of which this book is a kind of abstract. The new edition is greatly enlarged and carefully revised in comparison with the preceding ones; above all the number of the excellent reproductions has been considerably increased. Everybody will be glad to find more of the beautiful detail photographs, which had

already been an outstanding feature of the previous editions. The complicated creations of the late gothic sculptors of Germany very often reveal their qualities to the full extent only in such photographs, where one can study and enjoy a single head, a hand, or a piece of drapery undisturbed by the overwhelming richness of the whole.

It is unnecessary to insist here on the historical and artistic importance of Riemen-schneider. Because of the latter his name is famous far beyond the frontiers of his native country. And the most interesting position which he occupies between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance — in many respects similar to that of Perugino in Italy — secures for him a most important place in the history of art. Dr. Bier, besides giving a survey of the development of the artist, tries especially to define his peculiar historical mission.

The notes which accompany the plates are carefully compiled. They are full of useful and interesting information and they contain precise indications about the size, the material and the state of preservation of the sculptures reproduced, a thing always highly desirable, but seldom carried out with such care. The notes deserve almost as much attention as the text itself.

— ULRICH MIDDLEDORF

P. P. RUBENS, *LA KERMESSE FLAMANDE*. Introduction de Jacques Dupont. Paris, Éditions d'Histoire et d'Art, 1938.

The twenty-two plates detailing the great *Flemish Festival* in the Louvre reveal all the aspects of Rubens' vigorous dynamic style. The rhythmic movement of the design, the breadth and economy of the brushwork, the plastic vigor of the line, even the rich quality of the pigment, can be studied in these detail plates. M. Jacques Dupont, who so ably introduced the folder devoted to Hieronymus Bosch's *Altarpiece of St. Anthony* in Lisbon, stresses the wealth of possibilities for study contained in this fine series of plates.

PAUL CÉZANNE. By Fritz Novotny. Vienna, Phaidon Press, 1937.

A fine critical and biographical introduction, a group of good plates well selected and arranged, and a concise catalogue of the plates are combined to produce a splendid unpretentious monograph on Cézanne. Fritz Novotny's preface discusses, in clear scholarly terms, the essentially non-optical vision which characterizes Cézanne's painting. The author stresses the reduction of movement and of atmospheric effects, the dematerialization of substance, and the simplification of plastic form and luminary space. With a sure hand he defines all the terms of Cézanne's style, and just as surely he sketches the characteristics and the chronology of Cézanne's personal and artistic career. Any one who studies the plates in connection with the preface will achieve a deeper insight into Cézanne's art, and will form a clearer idea of the essential quality of all non-visual representation.

THE BIRDS OF AMERICA. By John James Audubon, with Introduction and Descriptive Text by William Vogt. New York, Macmillan, 1937.

Planned for popular appeal, this volume of color plates achieved a magnificent success as the most popular Christmas gift book for 1937. All the original plates of the "Elephant Folio" and all the additional illustrations printed a few years later in the octavo, *Birds of America*, are reproduced in color, forming a complete and attractive reference book for the connoisseur of Audubon prints. For the ornithologist the volume is of interest and value as the plates are accompanied by concise texts giving the modern names of the birds, ranges, habitat, identification, and, in some instances, songs. Mr. Vogt, Editor of *Bird Lore*, has transformed a volume on Audubon prints into an ornithological reference book. In this capacity the book is beyond criticism and will surely prove to be of lasting interest. As a book dealing solely with Audubon prints

the plates would be open to criticism. In a great many of the reproductions there is no indication of the original margins, and throughout there has been no attempt to reproduce the relative scale of the original prints. A great deal of the flavor and quality of the Audubon prints is lost because of this, and much of the fine variety of the original folio is dissipated.

— JEAN LIPMAN

AN EXTENSION OF LAWRENCE PARK'S DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE WORK OF JOSEPH BLACKBURN. By *John Hill Morgan and Henry Wilder Foote*. Illustrated 8vo. Wrappers. Worcester, Massachusetts, 1937.

Notwithstanding the fact that many of the portraits added in this supplementary brochure to those described in the late Lawrence Park's original list are included upon the study of photographs rather than the pictures themselves the work is a well considered and commendable effort toward a final resumé of Blackburn's American likenesses. As an American primitive, an importance incompatible with his modest accomplishment attaches to the artist's works. Both Blackburn and Copley were more successful in painting costume than in presenting in the faces of their sitters any convincing evidence of personalities. Their product is more valuable historically as a mirror of the mode of their day than for its preservation of individualities incorporated in portraiture.

JUSTUS ENGLEHARDT KÜHN, AN EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY PORTRAIT PAINTER. By *J. Hall Pleasants*. Worcester, Mass., American Antiquarian Society, 1937.

The hitherto unrecorded early American limner presented in this monograph, Justus Englehardt Kühn, worked in Maryland from 1708 to 1717, immediately preceding Gustavus Hesselius. His portraits so far as identified are all of the Digges-Darnell-Carroll family and though hardly deserving of consideration as works of art are historically interesting and important as evidence of the beginnings of portraiture in the United States. The author is to be congratulated upon discovering this unknown painter and on writing a thoroughly satisfactory essay on his work.

— FREDERIC FAIRCHILD SHERMAN

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

DR. CHRISTIAN BRINTON, Art Critic and Lecturer on Fine Arts

PROFESSOR GEORGE W. ELDERKIN, Department of Art and Archaeology,
Princeton University, Editor of *American Journal of Archaeology*

DR. WALTER FRIEDLAENDER, Professor of Fine Arts, New York University

DR. GEORG GRONAU, now deceased, formerly Director of the Cassel Royal
Gallery

MR. JAMES W. LANE, Lecturer on Fine Arts, New York University

DR. BERTHOLD LAUFER, died recently, formerly Siniologist in the Field
Museum of Chicago

PROFESSOR ULRICH MIDDLEDORF, Department of Fine Arts, University of
Chicago

MISS HELEN WOODRUFF, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton
University

